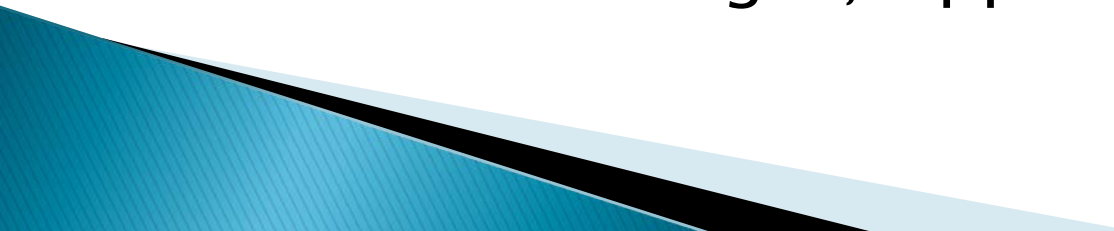


ADDRESSING THE ROOTS OF CHILD POVERTY

STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING OUT-OF-
WEDLOCK BIRTHS

Linda Malone-Colon, Ph.D.

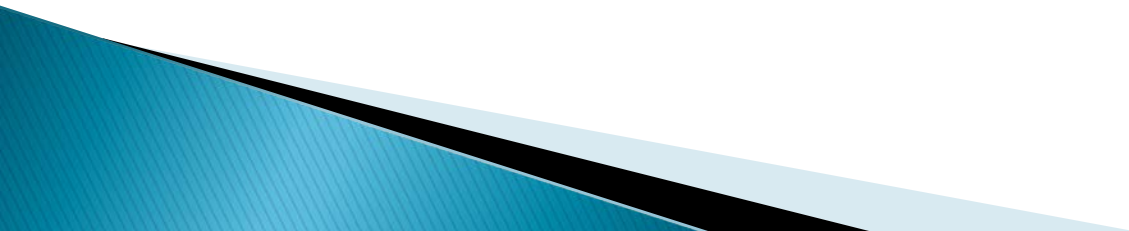
OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Review Marriage and Out-of-Wedlock Births Rates
 - ▶ Identify the Consequences of Marital Decline and Out-of-Wedlock Births
 - ▶ Identify Factors Associated with Marital Decline and Out-of-Wedlock Births
 - ▶ Discuss Challenges, Opportunities & Solutions
- 

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY CRISIS

DRAMATIC DECREASES IN MARRIAGE RATES

**DRAMATIC INCREASES IN CHILDREN BORN
OUT-OF-WEDLOCK AND REARED IN SINGLE
PARENT HOUSEHOLDS**




MARRIAGE AND FAMILY CRISIS


DRAMATIC DECREASES IN:

- ▶ Marital Quality
- ▶ Father Involvement
- ▶ Family Extendedness

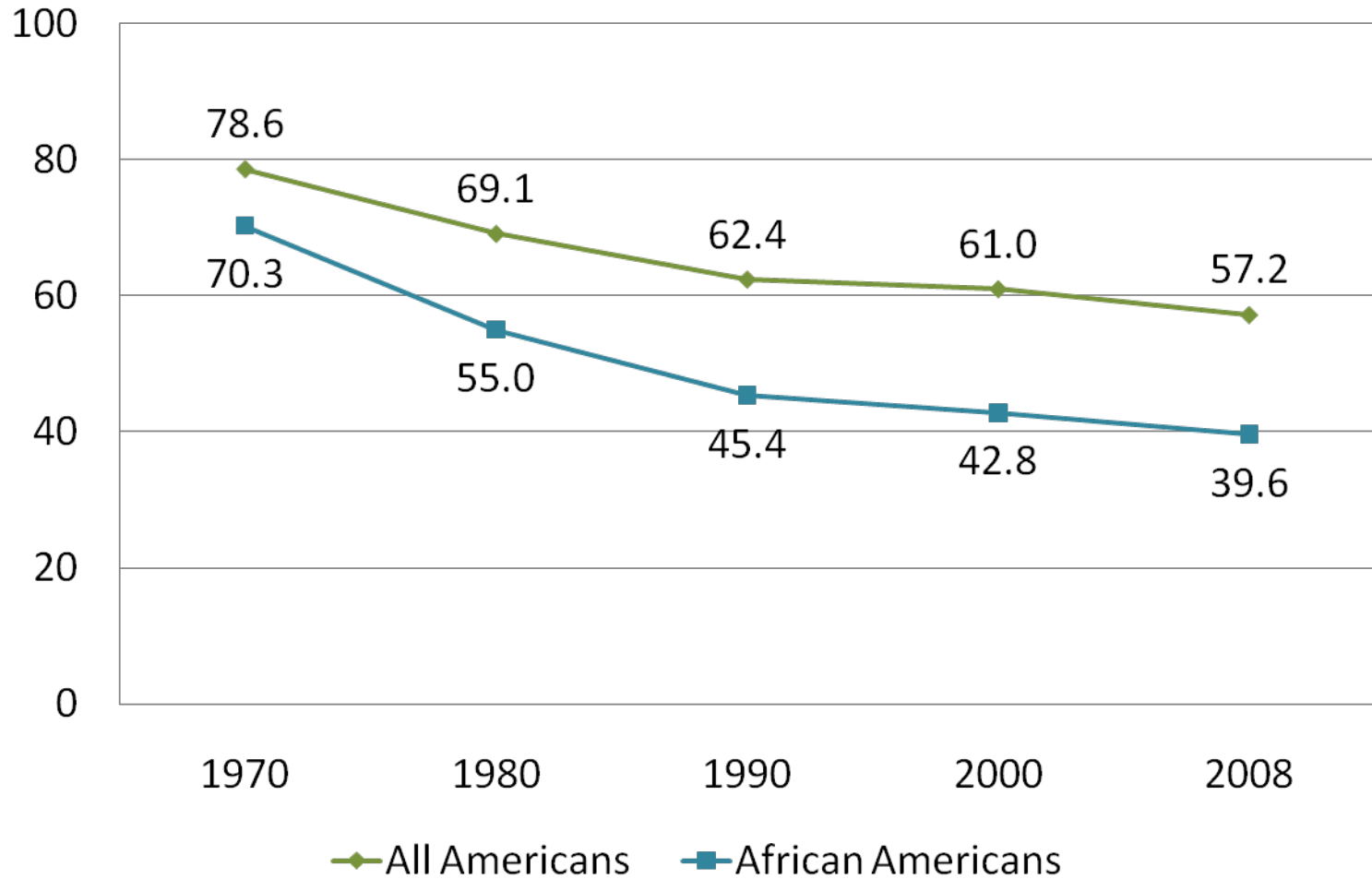
DRAMATIC INCREASES IN:

- ▶ Divorce
 - ▶ Separation
 - ▶ Those Who Never Marry
 - ▶ Cohabitation
 - ▶ Domestic Violence
- 

THE MARRIAGE INDEX

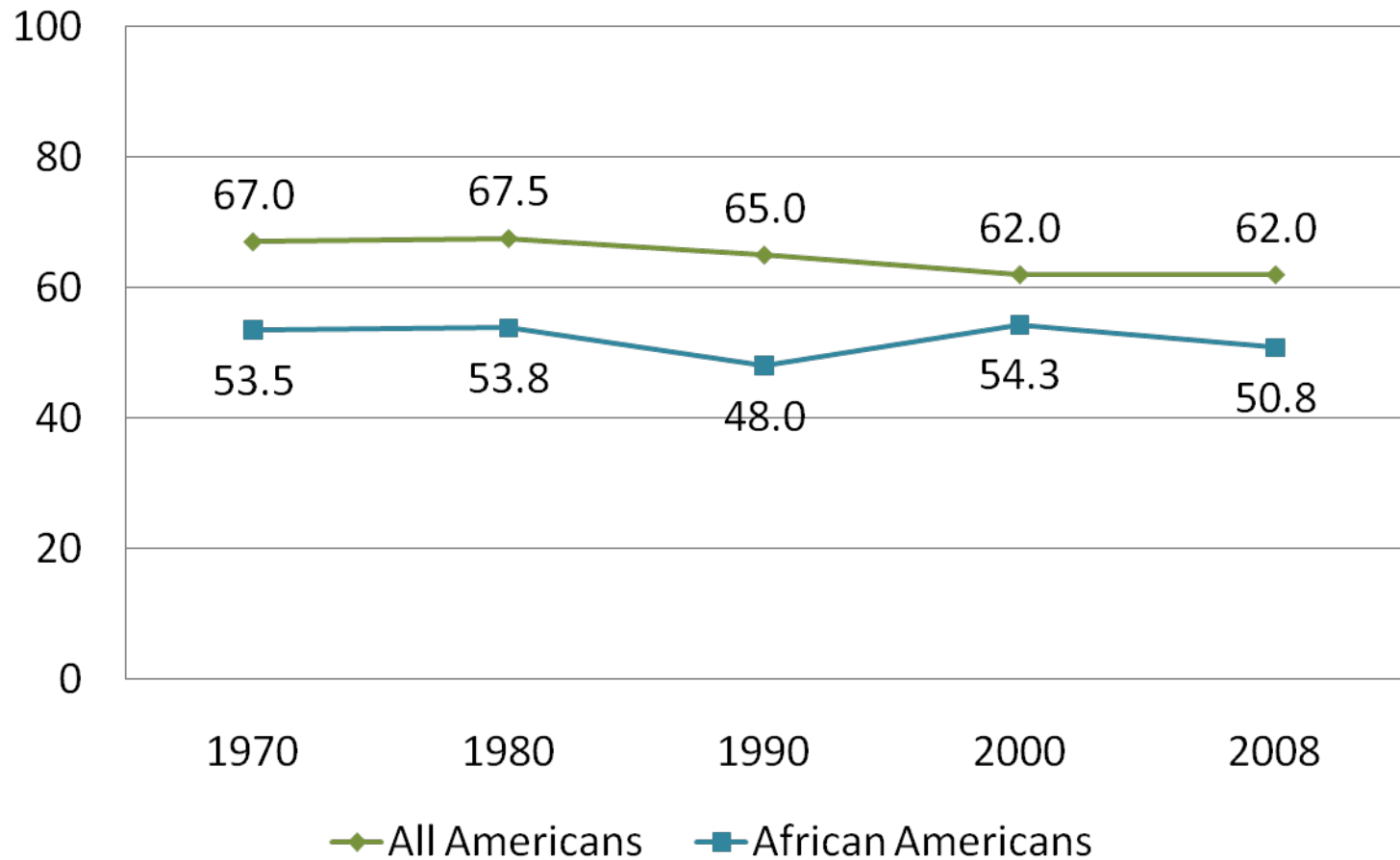
1. The Percentage of Adults Married
 2. The Percentage of Married Couples who are “Very Happy” in their Marriages
 3. The Percentage of First Marriages Intact
 4. The Percentage of Births to Married Parents
 5. The Percentage of Children Living with Parents
- 

Percentage of adults 20-54 who are married



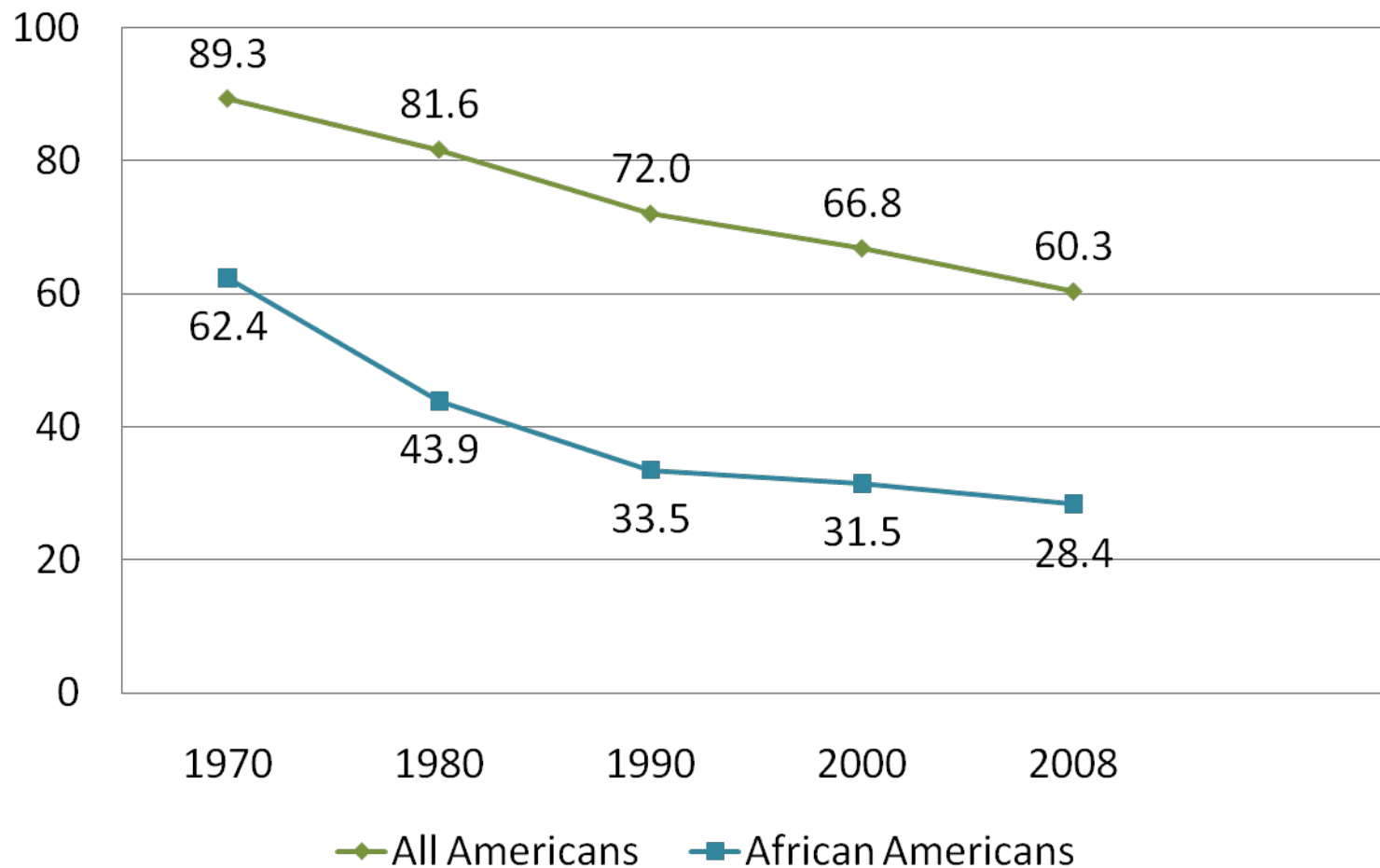
Source: *The Marriage Index*

Percent of married persons “very happy” with their marriages




Source: *The Marriage Index*

Percentage of births to married parents



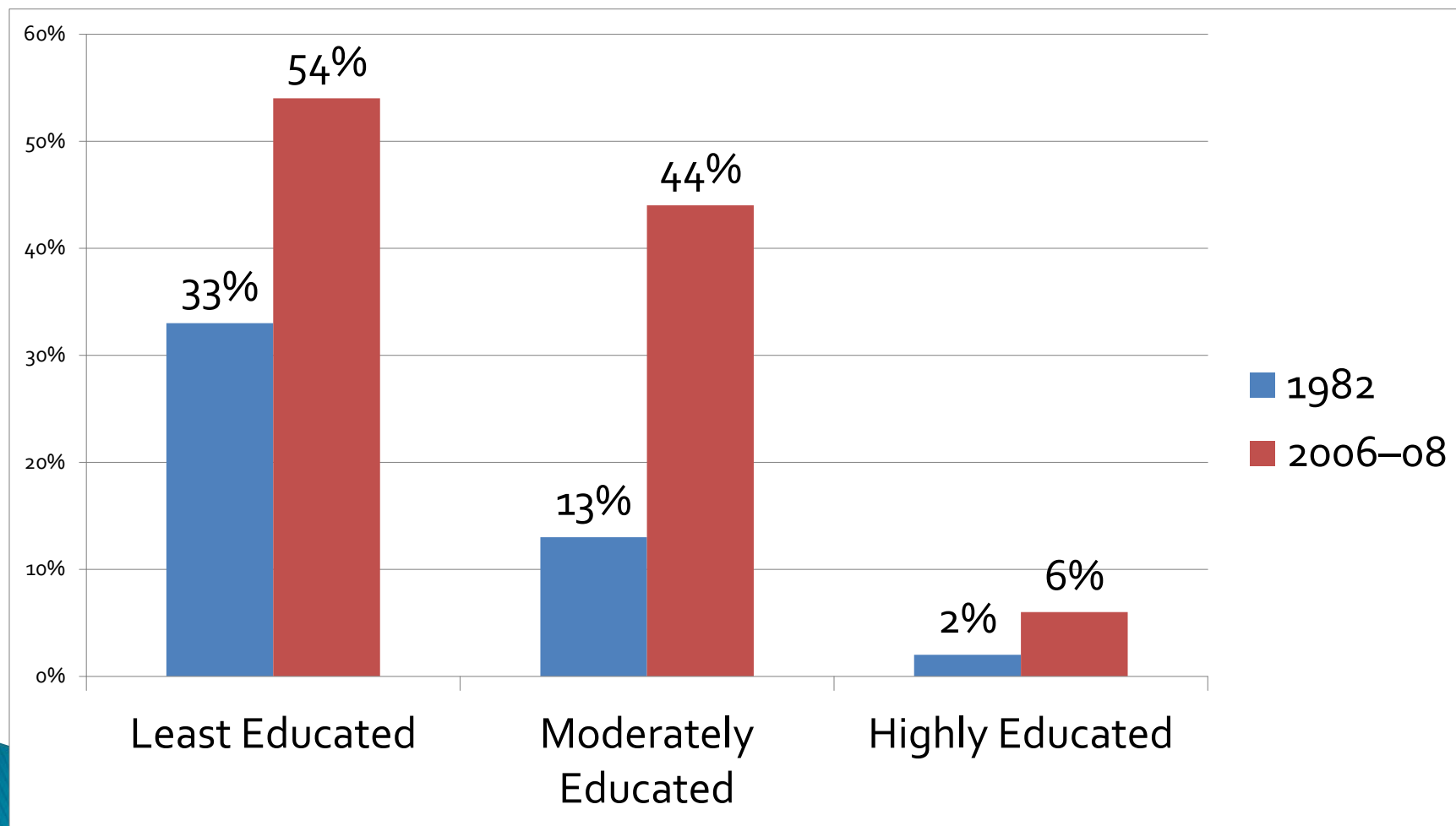
Source: *The Marriage Index*

The Growing Class Divide

- College-educated are enjoying relatively high-quality, stable marriages.
 - Middle Americans are less and less likely to form and sustain high-quality marriages.
 - Children in Middle America less likely to enjoy the benefits of growing up in an intact, married family.
 - Marital Decline and out-of-wedlock birth rates most pronounced in Middle America in recent years.
- 

The Class Divide in Nonmarital Childbearing

Source: NMP/IAV 2010



Growth of Unwed Childbearing by Race, 1929–2008

Historically, out-of-wedlock childbearing has been somewhat more frequent among blacks than among whites. However, before the onset of the federal government's War on Poverty in 1964, the rates for both whites and blacks were comparatively low.

In 1963, not even one in 10 (3.1 percent) white children was born outside marriage. By 2008, the number had risen to more than one in four (28.6 percent).

In 1963, about one in four black children (24.2 percent) was born outside marriage. By 2008, the number had risen to nearly three in every four (72.3 percent).

Source: U.S. Government, U.S. Census Bureau, and National Center for Health Statistics.

PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN BORN OUT OF WEDLOCK

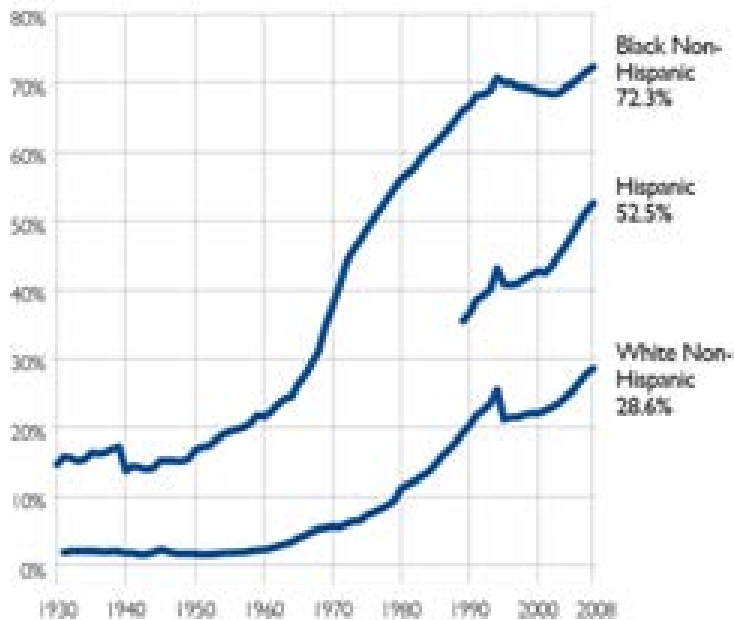


Chart 10 • Marriage and Poverty in the U.S. heritage.org

IMPACT ON CHILD POVERTY

- ▶ **DIVORCE AND UNMARRIED
CHILDBEARING INCREASE POVERTY
FOR CHILDREN AND MOTHERS**

Marriage Drops the Probability of Child Poverty by 82 Percent

The steady rise in out-of-wedlock child bearing is a major cause of high levels of child poverty in the U.S.

In 2008, more than a third (36.5 percent) of single mothers with children were poor, compared to only 6.4 percent of married couples with children.

Single-parent families with children are almost six times more likely to be poor than are married couples.

The higher poverty rate among single-mother families is due both to the lower education levels of the mothers and the lower income because of the absence of the fathers.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2006–2008 data.

PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN THAT ARE POOR

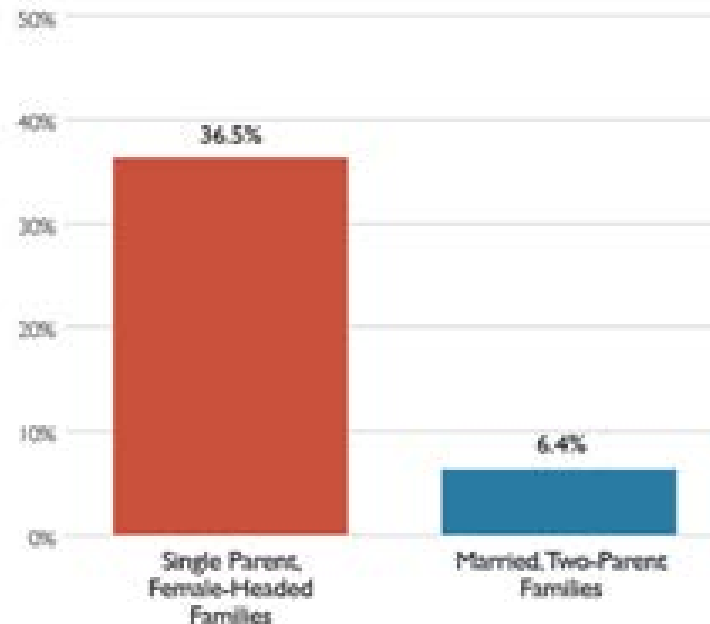


Chart 3 • Marriage and Poverty in the U.S. heritage.org

IMPACT ON CHILD WELL-BEING:

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

PHYSICAL HEALTH

MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

DELINQUENT AND CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR

FUTURE FAMILY OUTCOMES



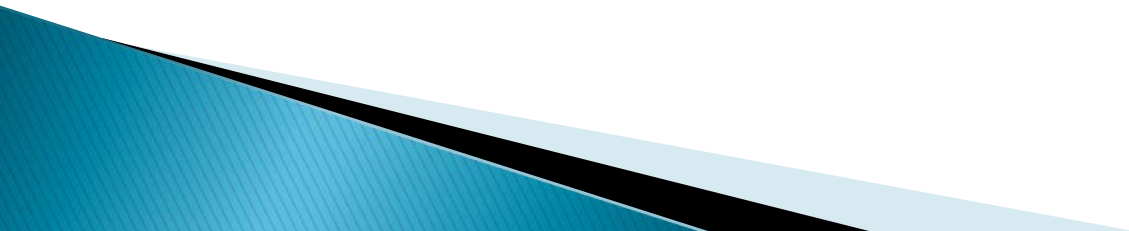
MARRIED ADULTS ARE:

- ▶ **HAPPIER**
 - ▶ **HEALTHIER**
 - ▶ **WEALTHIER**
 - ▶ **REPORT BETTER SEX**
 - ▶ **LESS PRONE TO VIOLENCE IN RELATIONSHIPS**
- 


IMPACT ON COMMUNITIES

- ▶ **COMMUNITIES WITH FEWER MARRIED COUPLES HAVE HIGHER RATES OF CRIME AND WOMEN ESPECIALLY ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE VICTIMS OF CRIME IN THESE COMMUNITIES.**

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH MARITAL DECLINE AND INCREASING OUT- OF-WEDLOCK BIRTHS RATES



FACTORS AFFECTING DECLINE

- 1. Economic Marginalization/Disadvantage**
 - 2. Low Educational Achievement**
 - 3. Two-Career Families and Greater Work Demands**
 - 4. Changing and Blurred Gender Roles**
 - 5. Mate Availability – Unbalanced Sex Ratio**
- 

FACTORS AFFECTING DECLINE

6. Distrust and Dishonesty

**7. Complex Families: Cohabitation, Divorce,
Those Who Never Marry, Multiple Partner
Fertility**

**8. Cohabitation, those who never married
and divorce normalized**

9. Influence of Popular Culture and the Media



CULTURAL VALUE SHIFTS

More Individualistic and Less Communal


More Materialistic and Less Spiritual

Less Social Support for Marriage

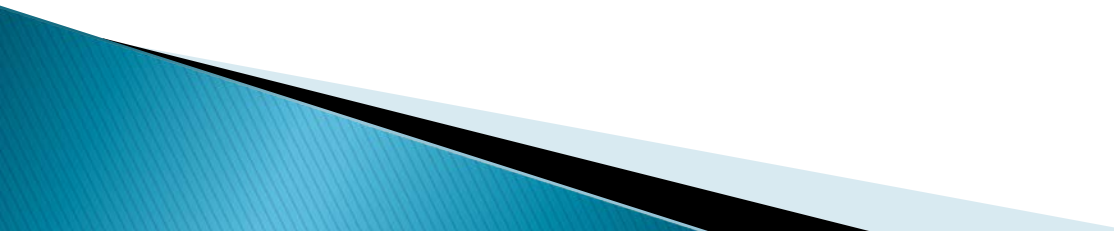
**Greater Acceptance of Alternatives to Marriage
(e.g. Cohabitation and Out-of-Wedlock
Childbearing)**



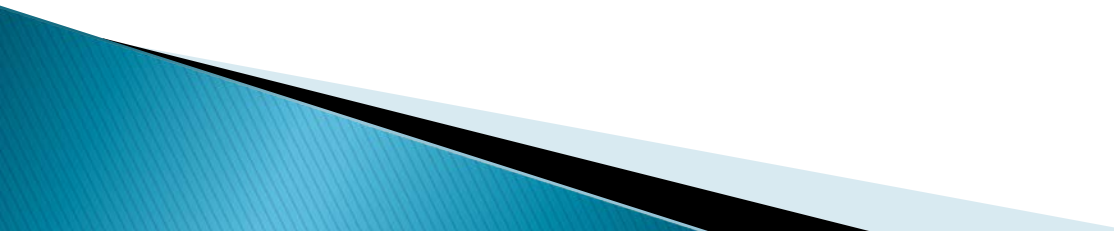
CHILD – RELIGIOUS INVOLVEMENT ASSOCIATED WITH:

- ▶ **BETTER PHYSICAL HEALTH**
 - ▶ **BETTER EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES**
 - ▶ **STRONGER FAMILY BONDS**
 - ▶ **LOWER PROBABILITY OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE,
DELINQUENCY AND DEPRESSION**
 - ▶ **LOWER PROBABILITY OF TEEN BIRTHS**
- 

CHALLENGES

- 1. Problem has reached a Crisis Level**
 - 2. Destructive Social and Cultural Force**
 - 3. Marriage is Political**
 - 4. Concern about Devaluing & Judging Single Parents and their Children Dominant Voices in Popular Culture**
- 

CHALLENGES

- 5. Resources Could Be Best Used Elsewhere**
 - 6. Public Leaders Limited Paradigms for Child Well-Being**
 - 7. Choice Between Personal Responsibility & Government Responsibility**
 - 8. Few Leaders Willing to Speak Up**
- 

CHALLENGES

9. Dominant Voices in Opposition

10. Give False Hope

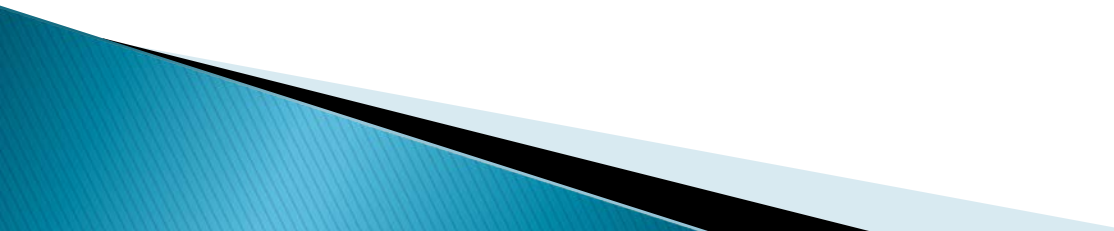
11. Loss of Hope

12. It's Personal

INSUFFICIENT NATIONAL ATTENTION



OPPORTUNITIES

- ▶ **MARRIAGE IS HIGHLY VALUED BY AMERICANS**
 - ▶ **IT'S PERSONAL**
 - ▶ **THE RECEPTIVITY OF YOUTH**
 - ▶ **ENGAGING AND INFLUENCING THE INFLUENCERS**
- 

SOLUTIONS

- ▶ ADDRESS SOCIETAL PROBLEMS
 - ▶ INCREASE RELATIONSHIP CAPACITY
 - ▶ PERSONAL AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT
 - ▶ COMMUNITY, STATE-WIDE AND NATION-WIDE APPROACHES
- 